Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Issue 627

Adoṣa-darśitā Guṇagrāhitā

Overlooking Faults and Finding Virtues

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तवकथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

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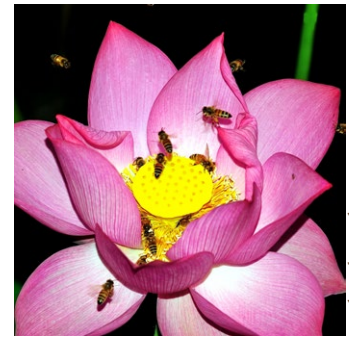


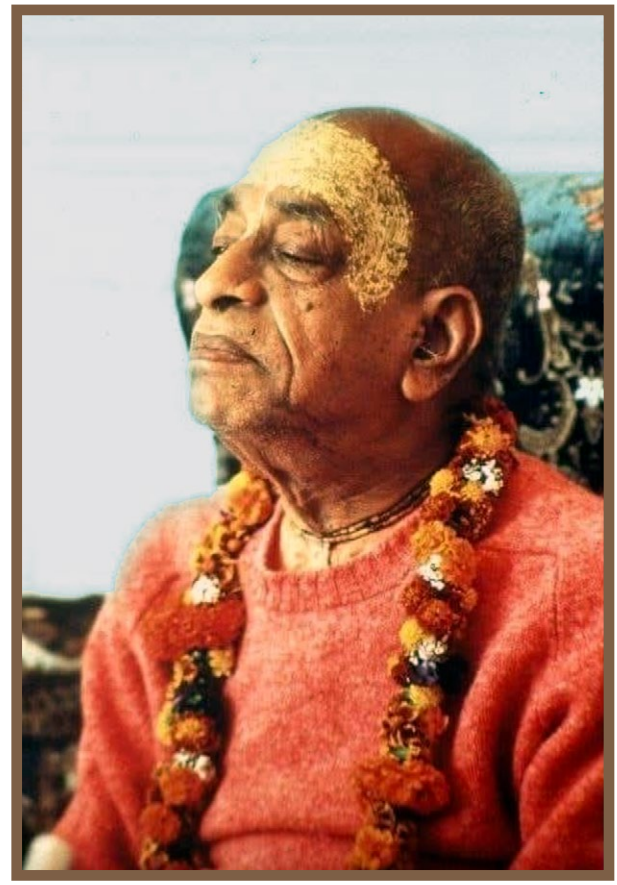
Photo by Zachary Huang

Flies and Honeybees

His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Apaiśunam means that one should not find fault with others or correct them unnecessarily. Of course, to call a thief a thief is not faultfinding, but to call an honest person a thief is very much offensive for one who is making advancement in spiritual life. *Hrī* means that one should be very modest and must not perform some act which is abominable. *Acāpalam*, determination, means that one should not be agitated or frustrated in some attempt. There may be failure in some attempt, but one should not be sorry for that; he should make progress with patience and determination. (From the purport to *Bg.* 16.2.)

It is a qualification of a *vaiṣṇava* that he is *adoṣa-darśī*: he never sees others' faults. Of course, every human being has both good qualities and faults. Therefore, it is said, *saj-janā guṇam icchanti doṣam icchanti pāmarāḥ:* everyone has a combination of faults and glories. But a *vaiṣṇava*, a sober man, accepts only a man's glories and not his faults, for flies seek sores whereas honeybees seek honey. (From the purport to *Cc. ādi* 8.62.)



Unknown photographer.

Cover: Krishna in the coils of Kaliya. By an unknown contemporary artist. Palackal Art Gallery.

Unknown artist. Pahari School. 1840

Krishna fights the demoniac sons of Banasura. From the pastime of Usha and Aniruddha

Seekers of Sores and Flowers

Lokanīti, verse 51

The Lokanīti *is a work of Buddhist literature that was written in Myanmar in the* Pāli *language around the 14th century. It is ascribed to Caturangabala, a minister and scholar, during the reign of King Kyaw Swar.* Lokanīti *is considered by scholars to be a cross-cultural work that adapted aphorisms of Chanakya Pandit and the Sanskrit* Purāṇas.

makṣikā vraṇam-icchanti puṣpam-icchanti ṣaṭpadāḥ
sajjanā guṇam-icchanti doṣam-icchanti pāmarāḥ

Flies seek out open sores, while honeybees seek out flowers; noble souls look for virtues, while the vulgar search only for flaws in others.

— Adapted from *Lokanīti: Method of Adaption and New Vocabulary. By Ujjwal Kumar*. University of Calcutta, Kolkata. 2017.

The Wolf and The Lamb

The Wolf and the Lamb

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

We often tell the story of the wolf and the lamb. "Somehow or other give him a bad name and kill him."

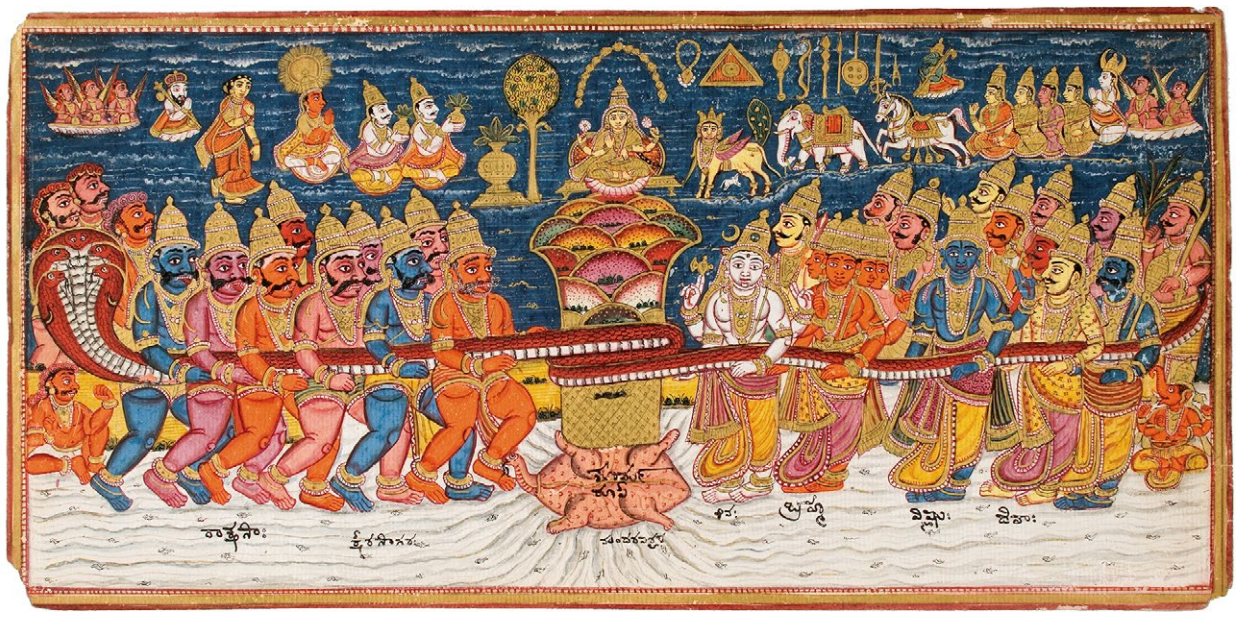
A wolf was drinking water from a river at the same time as an innocent lamb. The wolf thought, "Somehow or other I must devour that lamb." The wolf said, "Hey! Don't you know? Can't you see that I am drinking water here? Why are you making the water muddy for me? I shall kill you."

The lamb said, "Oh sir, you are drinking water upstream and I am drinking water downstream. How is it that I am making the water muddy for you?"

"Why did you call me bad names one year ago?"

Unknown artist. Chamba School. c. 1730-1740.

Krishna kills the demon Aghasura



Unknown artist. Tichinopoly, Tamil Nadu. 1825.

The devas and the daityas churn the ocean of milk

"Oh sir, I am only three months old. How is it that I called you bad names one year ago?"

"Your mother must have done so. Anyway, I will kill you."

This is the story of the wolf and the lamb and how all these concocted stories are going around. It illustrates how hatred, speaking ill, and concocting stories arise from intolerance or enviousness. You may say, "This devotee is not chanting his rounds! He is not following the regulative principles! He has become a *vaiṣṇava*, but now he is engaged in illegal and evil activities! If I remain silent and don't speak to him about it, then I am giving him the opportunity to commit more and more evil activities! I will be indirectly supporting him, just as if I would say, 'Yes, do it!' So in order to do good to him I shall speak to him."

Yet, if one analyses you are simply finding fault with that devotee. But are you perfect yourself? Are there no defects in you? The saying is there, a sieve has many holes and a needle has only one hole. The sieve says, "Oh needle, there is a hole in your back." The needle replies, "You have so many holes. I have only one hole." But the sieve criticizes the needle. So, one who criticizes should understand whether he himself is perfect or not. Are there no defects in me?" Only if someone is perfect can he find fault with others.

— From *The Worship of Sri Guru* pages 39-43. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar, Odisha. 2000.

Adoṣa-darśitā Guṇagrāhitā

Overlooking Faults and Finding Virtues

Per their publishing standard, no name was given for the author of this article, which was from the weekly Gauḍīya *and published in* Gauḍīya-Prabandha-Mālā*, volume II. It was published under the guidance of the editor Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada.*

We behold the tiny, point-like fault of another as though it were an ocean, yet we fail to perceive even an infinitesimal fraction of our own ocean-like faults.

This tendency toward faultfinding often nourishes the blazing fire of envy residing within our hearts under the respectable pretexts of, "defending *śrī-guru* and the *vaiṣṇavas*" or "rejecting bad association". Thus we verbally reassure both ourselves and our conscience, "Since such-and-such a person is a critic of *śrī-guru* and the *vaiṣṇavas*, it is my duty to point out his faults; indeed, this is *vaiṣṇava-dharma*."

However, we frequently make a false display of devotion to *śrī-guru* and the *vaiṣṇavas* as our convenient shield and pretext, beneath which we attempt to unfurl the banner of imagined *Vaiṣṇavism*. In this way we deceive our own minds and endeavor to cast dust into the eyes of *śrī-guru* and the *vaiṣṇavas*.

But the conduct of those *vaiṣṇava ṭhākuras* who are truly *sva-doṣa-darśī* (seers of their own faults)

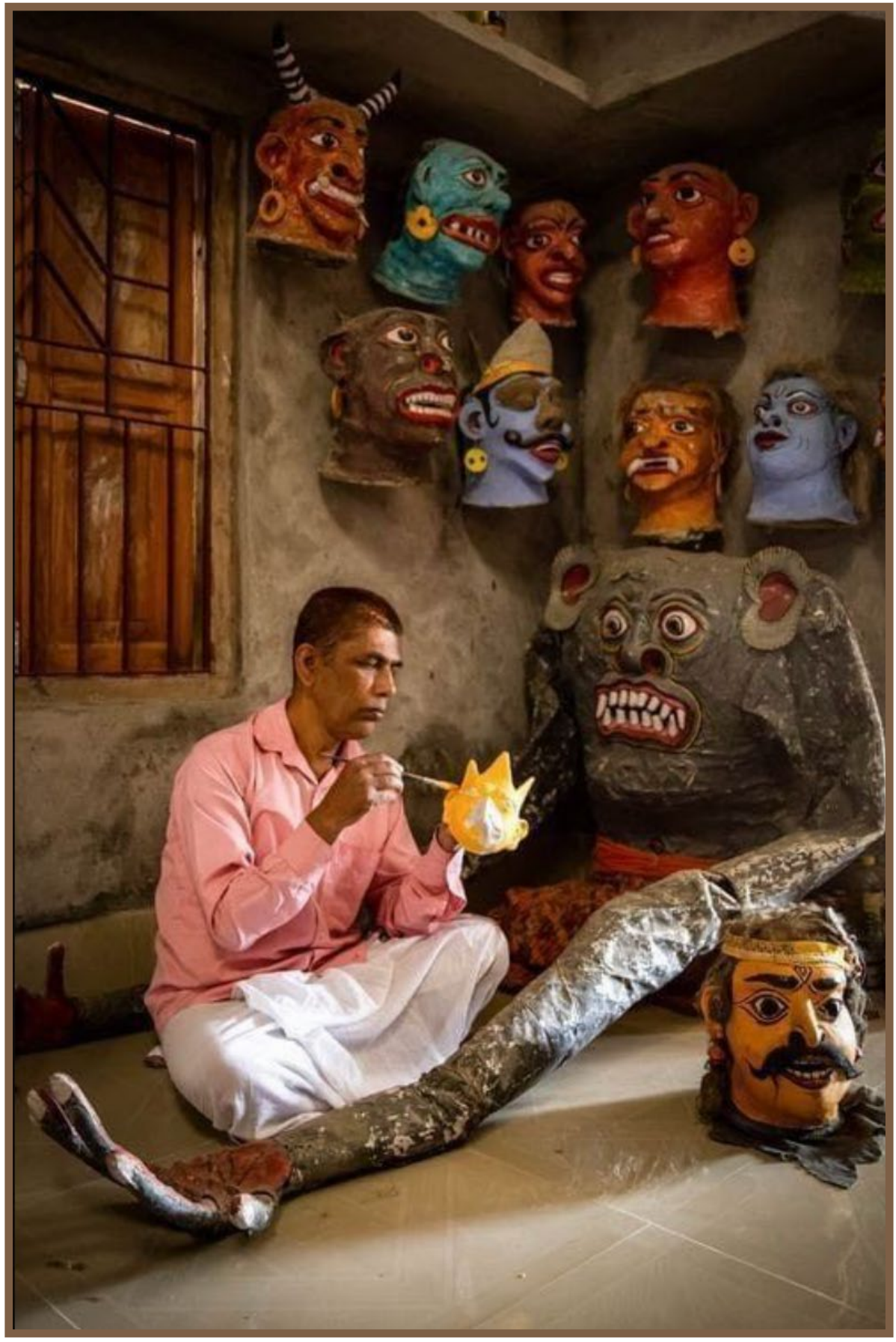


Photo by Bhakti Gokhale. National Geographic Your Shot

An artist in Majuli Island in Assam making a traditional Mukha mask

By a member of the first generation after Nainsukh Punjab Hills. Kangra or Guler, c. 1740–1830.

Burning of the house of Lac. The Mahābharata *describes the cunning intrigue of Duryodhan to kill the Pandavas and their mother Kunti by burning them alive.*

and *adoṣa-darśī* (persons who don't see any faults in others) is never of such a nature. The tendency toward faultfinding, when nourished by the association of faultfinders, becomes like a fire supplied with abundant fuel. It swiftly expands, covering heaven and earth and threatening to consume the entire world.

Conversely, in the association of *adoṣa-darśī vaiṣṇava*s, the spirit of self-reproach (*ātma-dhikkāra*) steadily deepens, and in exact proportion the disposition of overlooking the faults of others flourishes and expands. For one who is constantly absorbed in examining and lamenting his own shortcomings, where is the opportunity to scrutinize the faults of others?

The proud and egotistical man is blind when the time comes to perceive his own defects, yet in perceiving the faults of others it's as though he had a thousand eyes.

Srila Jiva Goswami Prabhu has explained in the *Bhakti-sandarbha* that both the *madhyama-bhāgavatas* and the *uttama-bhāgavatas* remain indifferent toward those who are inimical to them personally. Even when the conduct of those who are hostile toward Sri Bhagavan and his devotees causes disturbance to their hearts, they do not respond by becoming inwardly absorbed in hostility.

Indeed, the *uttama-bhāgavata* sees a manifestation (*sphūrti*) of his worshipable Lord even within his enemy and even within those who are opposed to the devotees and to Bhagavan himself.

The reverential salutations offered by the exalted *mahā-bhāgavata* Sri Uddhava Maharaja toward Dhritarashtra, Duryodhan, and others who were antagonistic to the Pandavas, stand as evidence of this truth.

Even when exalted devotees outwardly chastise, correct, or punish those who are opposed to Bhagavan or his devotees, no trace of personal malice resides within such actions. Beneath that apparent discipline there operates only the inspiration, manifestation, and benevolent purpose of their worshipable Lord. Their actions are moved solely by divine compassion and concern for ultimate welfare.

Seeing others behave offensively toward Sri Bhagavan, their hearts may become distressed,

Unknown artist. Odisha. Late 18th-century.

Rasa-līlā *of Krishna and the Vraja* **gopīs**

Photo by Siddharthan.

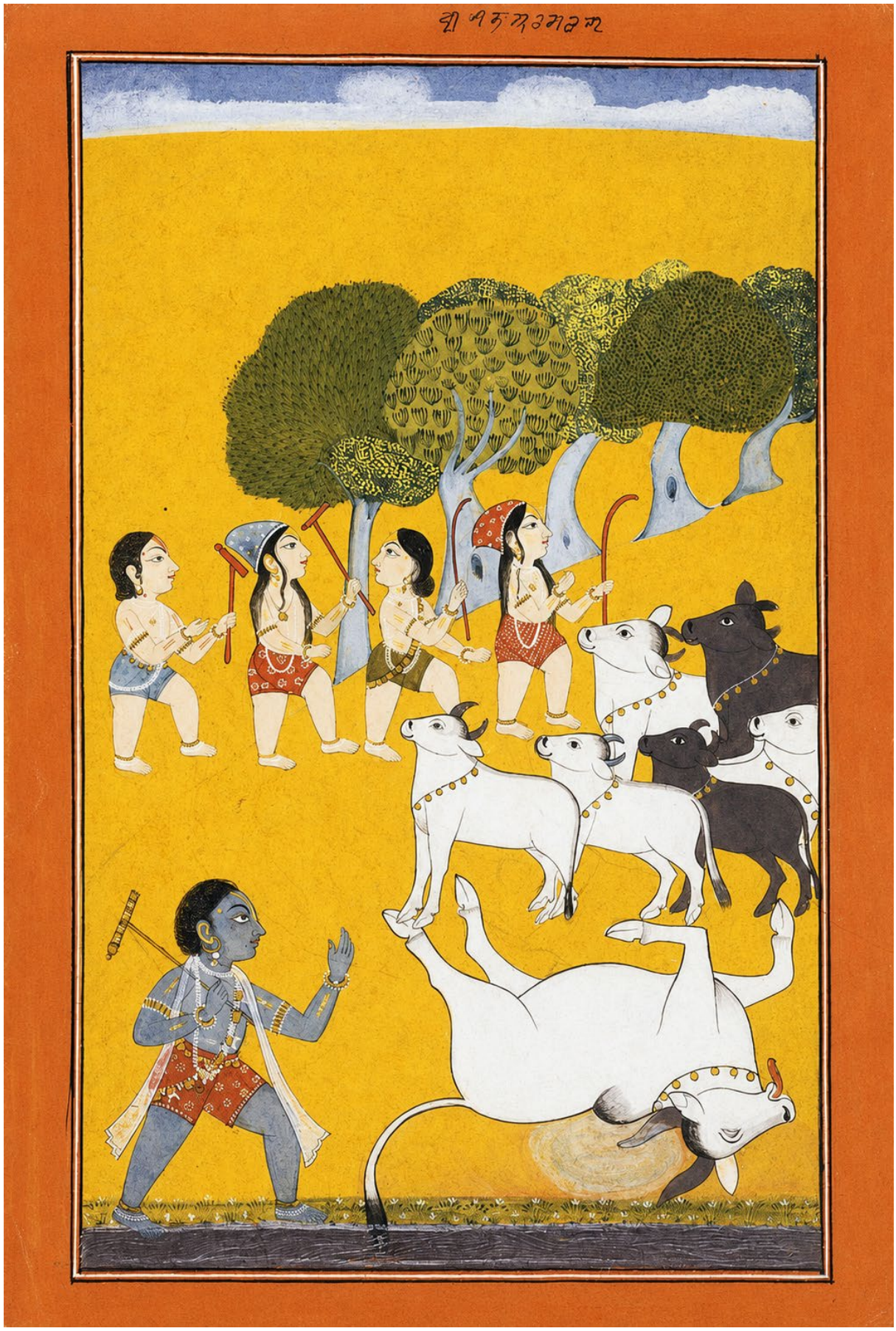
A mural of Krishna on the wall from the Kumartuli potters quarter in northern Kolkata

yet their inner reflection is of the following nature: "Who among conscious beings could fail to love that Supreme Person, the very source of all bliss — *sarvānanda-kanda*; the treasure-house of causeless divine love — *nirupādhika-prema-rasa-sampad*; the bestower of grace upon all, adorned with the jewels of every noble virtue, the supreme benefactor of all worlds, and the embodiment of the nectar of devotion? And who could fail to love those who are dear to him? If anyone harbors hostility toward him, what could possibly be the cause? Such a thing lies beyond the reach of our understanding. Therefore, from Brahma down to the immovable beings, whether visible or invisible, all creatures are in truth naturally attached to and affectionate toward the Supreme Lord Purushottam."

Habitual faultfinders often argue that imitating the highest *mahā-bhāgavatas* — who completely overlook the faults of others — creates a spiritual trap. They cite the example of Srila Raghunath Bhatta Goswami, who, "never accepted criticism of a *vaiṣṇava* and saw only that everyone is engaged in *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*" (*Cc. ādi* 13.133). They also point to the total forgiveness shown to offenders by saints like Sri Uddhava, Sri Haridas Thakur, Sri Vāsudeva Datt Thakur, Sri Narottam Thakur Mahasaya, Sri Kureshacharya, and others. According to these critics, copying this elevated, non-judgmental vision forces a devotee to break the foundational rule of *vaiṣṇava* behavior: *asat-saṅga-tyāga* — the rejection of bad association. Thus, they claim that under the guise of acting like a great soul, one will foolishly honor and embrace harmful association.

Such is their argument. Yet if those who advance this reasoning were requested to place their hand upon their heart and speak with unalloyed honesty, they would be compelled to admit the following truth: Where condemnation of bad association is prescribed for the sake of self-protection, it is actually the evil disposition (*asad-vṛtti*) that ought to be condemned, not the person himself. However, in practice, this is seldom what occurs.

In almost every case, the criticism does not remain confined to the corrupt tendency. Rather, when that tendency becomes embodied in a particular individual, hostility toward the individual himself gradually becomes predominant.



Unknown artist. Basohli school. Circa 1730–1740.

Krishna kills the demon Vatsasura who appeared in the form of a calf

Unknown artist. Basohli region. Pahari School. 1760-1765.

Kaliya and his wives take shelter of Krishna

In other words, instead of protecting oneself from an unhealthy influence, one begins to cultivate aversion toward the person influenced by the negative quality. While ostensibly rejecting the undesirable object, one secretly derives pleasure from condemning its possessor. Thus, the fire of envy is fed and strengthened.

Repulsion from sense objects and hatred for persons attached to sense objects or sinful activities are not the same thing. Likewise, an inert object of enjoyment (*jaḍa-viṣaya*) and the person attached to that object (*jaḍa-viṣayī*) are not one indivisible reality. Yet, in most cases, the fault itself is not truly rejected; rather, hostility toward the person attached to that fault becomes the ultimate objective.

As a result, the critic eventually attains a kind of oneness with the very person he condemns and falls into a state of indistinction. In other words, the person who began by scrutinizing faults and cultivating aversion toward the sense-enjoyer ultimately becomes himself deeply attached to sense enjoyment and even assumes the disposition of a *pāṣaṇḍī*. (To be continued in the next issue).

— Translated by Raya Ramananda Das

Closing Thoughts
Heart Disease In Vrindavan

In part six of the sixth chapter of his epic book, *Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta,* Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode explains, "*Sādhakas* aspire to destroy their respective *anarthas* by meditating on Krishna's divine pastimes. Those occasional pastimes are as follows ..." He then goes on to describe twenty-one *naimittika* or occasional pastimes of the Lord which represent various obstacles in the journey of a devotee to Krishna's abode of Vrindavan. The tenth obstacle is the wicked snake Kaliya. Bhaktivinode comments: The subduing of the serpent Kaliya represents the removal of pride, wickedness, malice toward others, cruelty, and lack of compassion for living beings."

When broken down grammatically, the name "*kālīya*" is derived by adding a relational suffix to the base word *kāla*, meaning "one who embodies or belongs to" the characteristics of *kāla*. The word

Unknown artist. Pahari school. 1740–1760.

Krishna dances on the heads of Kaliya while his wives offer prayers

kāla itself possesses several layers of meaning, including a dark color, a venomous serpent, censure, and night. These meanings illuminate Kaliya's symbolic connection with the dark night of the soul and the toxic atmosphere of criticism. His nature mirrors the dense, unyielding qualities of the Iron Age of Kali.

Kaliya's home in the Yamuna is known as *kālīya-hrada*. "*Hrada*" refers to a large or deep pool of water. While the word *hrada* (lake) and *hṛd* (heart) stem from different grammatical roots in Sanskrit, their spiritual alignment in this pastime is profound. The *kālīya-hrada* represents the deep pool of the human heart, which has been contaminated by the venom of criticism which Krishna cleanses.

Water is life. In the *Amara-kośa* Sanskrit dictionary, the word *jīvanam* is a synonym for both life and water. Water is the life of every community — which can't exist without it. Similarly, the Yamuna is the life of Vrindavan. In the *Harivaṁśa Purāṇa* (11.56), Krishna declares: "I must somehow subdue this king of serpents, Kaliya, so that this river, which supplies water to the residents of Vrindavan, may again become *śiva-jalāśayā* — a source of welfare and shelter for them." By using the word "*śiva*," which means auspicious, beneficial, and conducive to welfare, Krishna emphasizes that the Yamuna is not just scenery; she is a source of health, safety, and life-sustaining shelter for the residents of Vraja. Similarly, in chapter nine of his *Ānanda-vṛndāvana-campū,* Srila Kavi Karnapur says, *yamunāyā hṛd-rogaḥ* — (Kaliya was) "a heart disease in the Yamuna."

The tenth obstacle in attaining Krishna's abode of Vrindavan or in establishing a Vrindavan community, is the wicked snake Kaliya who represents the black venom of criticism. Just as Kaliya was a heart disease that poisoned Vraja, similarly, criticism and harsh words poison both the heart of a devotee as well as the *vaiṣṇava* community.

Therefore, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu instructs in *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*madhya* 19.214):

anindaka hai' ye sakṛt 'kṛṣṇa' bale
satya satya muñi tāre uddhāriba hele"

"If a person becomes free from criticism and chants the name of Krishna even once, truly, truly, I will deliver them with ease." 🍊

— MDas.

Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

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Pleasing Words

Among Krishna's primary sixty-four qualities, the 9th is priyaṁvadaḥ *— he always speaks in a pleasing way. In his* Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu (2.1.70-71), *Srila Rupa Goswami describes:*

jane kṛtāparādhe 'pi sāntva-vādi priyaṁvadaḥ

Speaking in a pleasing manner' means speaking in a pleasing manner even to those who have offended.

kṛta-vyalīke 'pi na kuṇḍalīndra
tvayā vidheyā mayi doṣa-dṛṣṭiḥ
pravāsyamāno 'si surārcitānāṁ
paraṁ hitāyādya gavāṁ kulasya

[Krishna's sweet words to Kaliya:] O king of the snakes! Though I have afflicted you, do not find fault in me. For the good of the cows, worthy of respect by the *devatās*, you should live far from here.